

FACT SHEET: CITIZEN SERVICE BEFORE SELF HONORS

NATIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR DAY

In March 2007, by a Proclamation of Congress, National Medal of Honor Day was established as an annual observance to commemorate the historic Act signed by President Lincoln and to remind the American public about the Medal's history and ideals. The Medal of Honor was established in 1861, and the first Medals of Honor were presented on March 25, 1863. Since that enactment, the Medal, which has been awarded fewer than 3,500 times, has been our nation's highest award for military valor.

The Congressional Medal of Honor Society, chartered by the Congress in 1958, consists exclusively of the living Medal of Honor recipients. Today, fewer than 90 recipients remain alive ranging in age from 23 to 94 and live in all areas of our country. For more information, visit www.cmohs.org.

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On October 9, 2007, on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., in honor of the President who established the Medal of Honor, the Congressional Medal of Honor Society and Co-chair General Colin L. Powell (USA-Retired) announced *Above & Beyond* as a non-partisan "Service Before Self" initiative and called upon the American public to nominate fellow citizens.

That event was the first time the living Medal of Honor recipients, who have been on the receiving end of countless accolades and respect from the American public, had banded together to create a national platform to promote "Service Before Self." At the heart of the initiative was the *Citizen Service Before Self Honors*, which would recognize and honor ordinary Americans who became extraordinary by going above and beyond on behalf of their fellow man either through a single act of heroism involving risk to one's life or by demonstrating a profound long-term commitment to selfless service.

Nominations for the *Citizen Service Before Self Honors* are submitted online at www.CitizenServiceBeforeSelfHonors.org. Finalists will be selected by a board, including Medal of Honor recipient representation. From the finalists, the Congressional Medal of Honor Society will select three extraordinary individuals to receive the *Citizen Service Before Self Honors*. The three honorees will receive a framed certificate, recognizing their selfless act(s), heroism or prolonged service in addition to a *Citizen Service Before Self Honors* medal.